



## Coffee Break Training - Training Programs and Tips

### Emergency Responder Training Part 2

No. TR-2013-3 April 11, 2013

**Learning Objective:** The student shall be able to describe the importance of training as well as the importance of training safely.

Selecting topics for drill night is a common challenge for training officers. Coming up with new and exciting topics month after month can be difficult.

To help prioritize training topics, break them into two categories: high frequency/low risk and low frequency/high risk. High frequency/low risk events occur on a regular basis and pose little risk to firefighter safety. Such topics include taking blood pressures, activating the fire alarm, responding to Emergency Medical Services calls, and communicating over the radio. While local regulations may require occasional refresher training on these topics, they certainly should not dominate a drill night. If you have to do training on these types of topics, comply with the regulation, but make the training as quick and painless as possible.



It's important for smaller volunteer departments to practice low frequency/high risk events, such as extinguishing vehicle fires (above), on the training ground.

Much more important are events that happen rarely but pose a serious risk to firefighters. These events include fighting structural and vehicle fires, responding to hazardous materials incidents, and specific tasks such as cutting vent holes in roofs or forcing doors. Because smaller departments staffed with volunteers seldom do these tasks on the fireground, they must compensate by practicing on the training ground. Drills on advancing hose lines, operating power equipment, and throwing ladders should be in the regular drill schedule.

Monthly training sessions should reflect critical skills that the firefighters carry out on the local fireground. The department's officers and firefighters should meet to create a list of these skills. Then, they should develop questionnaires to determine which skills need the most work. For example, ask how many times a firefighter has started the power saw on the truck or changed the saw blade. Ask how many times a firefighter has placed a 24-foot extension ladder, and whether he or she has removed the ladder from the side of the engine to the fireground.

Finally, training should include a periodic review of standard operating procedures and standards of governance as well as any changes to the SOPs and standards of governance that occur between scheduled review sessions.

Source: International Association of Fire Chiefs

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